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DIRECTORATE OF
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Central Intelligence Bulletin

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29 April 1970

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Approved For Release 2003/03/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A016100070001-5

Approved For Release 2003/03/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A016100070001-5

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No. 0102/70
29 April 1970

Central Intelligence Bulletin

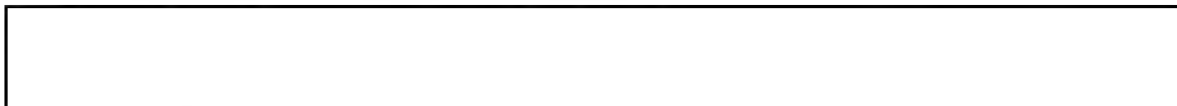
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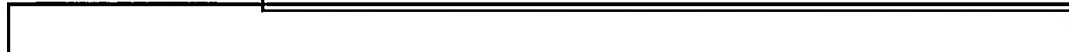
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North Vietnam: The chief Viet Cong delegate's announcement yesterday that she is leaving Paris is one more indication that the Vietnamese Communists may put the Paris talks on ice for the time being.

It is not clear from Madame Binh's statement how soon she will be leaving [REDACTED]

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Her departure will leave Xuan Thuy, her counterpart in the North Vietnamese delegation, as the only high-ranking Vietnamese Communist official still in Paris. North Vietnamese spokesmen have hinted that he too may be leaving soon.

Madame Binh placed heavy emphasis during her press conference on the recent Indochinese "summit conference" and on the "mutual solidarity" of the region's three countries. This strongly suggests that the Vietnamese Communists think considerable advantage now can be gained by casting their military pressure in an Indochinese context. They may believe that this approach will, for the time being, have a greater impact both in the US and Southeast Asia than would an initiative in Paris or any other international forum. [REDACTED]

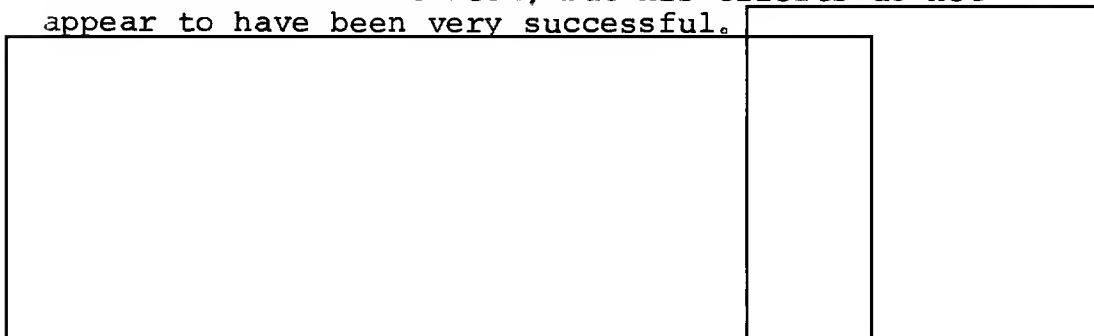
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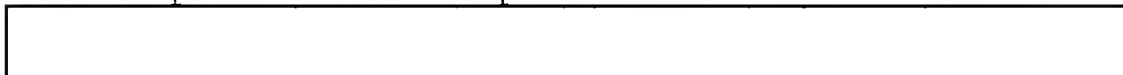
South Vietnam: President Thieu may soon clash again with the National Assembly in his attempt to get special decree powers.

Although the government has not yet forwarded its request to the Assembly for legislation to deal with the country's pressing economic problems, members of the cabinet have begun to lobby for the measure. Prime Minister Khiem met with leaders of the Lower House last week, but his efforts do not appear to have been very successful.



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Meanwhile, Presidential Assistant Thang has run into difficulties in his efforts to secure early passage of tax legislation designed to replace last fall's austerity decree. Thieu had sought to have the law passed prior to a Supreme Court decision that may declare the decree unconstitutional. Moreover, in his attempt to push for early passage of the measure, Thang has apparently caused a split in the major progovernment bloc in the Lower House, some of whose members reportedly are ready to withdraw in protest over the presidential aide's actions.



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East Germany - West Germany: Pankow and Bonn apparently are prepared to sign today an agreement regulating and improving postal and telecommunication traffic.

The East Germans reportedly are willing to drop their insistence that West Berlin authorities negotiate directly with them concerning telecommunications in Berlin, and will eventually restore direct telephone and telecommunication links between the two parts of the city. Bonn, in turn, is willing to drop its demand that explicit reference to Berlin be included in the agreement, and is prepared to hold further negotiations concerning East German claims for payments for services prior to 1967. The East Germans have used the issue of Berlin to delay concluding an agreement, even though negotiations started last September.

Pankow reportedly said that a postal agreement would aid in preparations for the summit meeting in Kassel on 21 May--a sentiment doubtless shared in Bonn.

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Costa Rica:

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Thousands of Communist-inspired university and high school students, protesting the signing of the Alcoa contract, rampaged through the streets of San Jose last Friday in one of the largest demonstrations since the 1948 revolution. Students seriously damaged the National Assembly building, burned cars, looted downtown shops, and broke a window in the US Embassy.

The students, rather than Alcoa, have borne the brunt of press criticism, and public sentiment has been uniformly unfavorable to the rioters. The government

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will undoubtedly take steps to keep the students from marring the inauguration of President-elect Jose Figueres on 8 May.

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International Labor: Moscow's modified proposal for a European trade union conference has met with a generally cool reception in European capitals.

A Soviet trade union representative has emphasized in visits to Brussels, Amsterdam, and London this month that his country no longer insists that European security issues be on the agenda of such a conference. Instead, he has spoken of a meeting that would deal with economic and social problems, such as those caused by technological change.

This shift in Soviet tactics may have made the proposal more palatable to some Europeans, but many are still skeptical. In both London and Amsterdam, trade union officials stressed to the Soviet representative that the conference should be held under the auspices of the International Labor Organization, an idea the Soviets find unacceptable. In Brussels, trade union officials were noncommittal about the Soviet proposal. They stressed, however, that the withdrawal of the AFL-CIO from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was forcing its Western European members to look eastward.

A conference in which both the ICFTU and the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions would participate has been a Soviet objective for many years. The Soviets now apparently realize that tying the conference to European security was a mistake and are attempting to keep the idea alive by shifting its emphasis. An important factor in determining whether a European trade union conference will be convened is the reaction of the West German Trade Union Federation, which is still not clear.

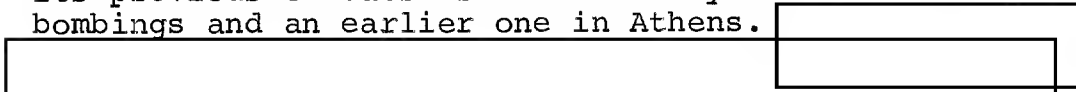
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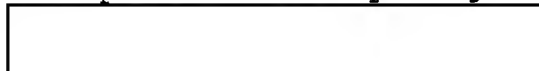
Arab States - Fedayeen: The US has been named as the target of a terrorist campaign by yet another fedayeen organization. The Popular Struggle Front, which claims responsibility for the bombing of El Al and Pan American airline offices in Turkey last weekend, announced at a news conference in Amman that the group has decided to begin a worldwide attack against US interests. The spokesman also vaguely hinted that his group may attempt to attack targets within the US. Although the Front has only about 200 members, it has been able to carry out its previous threats as indicated by the two recent bombings and an earlier one in Athens.



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Guyana: The government is seeking greater control both of new and existing foreign investments. Prime Minister Burnham announced at a press conference last week that the government intends to hold discussions with the foreign-owned bauxite and sugar industries in order to ensure local "meaningful participation" in controlling these industries. He also said future concessions will require a minimum Guyanese participation of 51 percent. It is unclear how Burnham intends to approach the large British and US-owned investments, but he probably will be cautious and attempt to avoid imposing drastic restrictions.

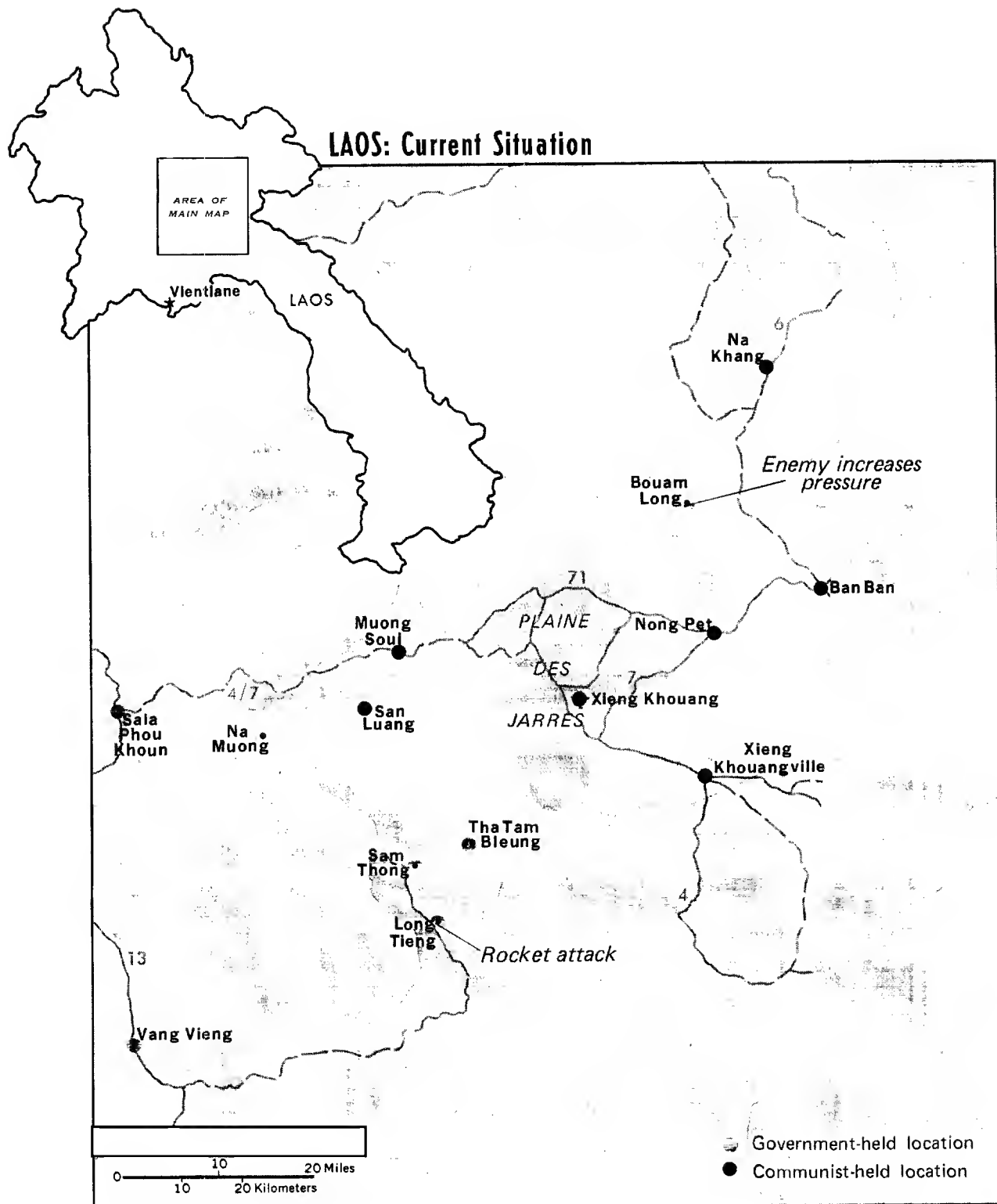


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Laos: The military situation remains essentially unchanged south of the Plaine des Jarres, although light enemy probes have been reported near Tha Tam Bleung and Sam Thong. On 28 April four 122-mm. rockets hit near the Long Tieng airstrip, but no casualties or serious damage occurred. North of the Plaine, the North Vietnamese are intensifying pressure against Bouam Long, although so far government losses have been light.

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